The House That Jacksons Built

ANNA E. KOGLIN

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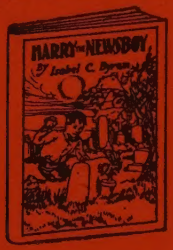

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THE HOUSE THAT JACKSONS BUILT

ON THE JACKSON FARM

The House That Jacksons Built

By ANNA E. KOGLIN

Pen Drawings
by
Vera Stone Norman

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THE HOUSE THAT JACKSONS BUILT

CHAPTER I

A Queer Christmas-Tree

It was the week before Christmas. Mrs. Jackson was sewing on something that looked like a doll's arm when it

was stuffed with sawdust. After the arm was finished she sewed it on the doll-body she had made the night before.

"What do you think, Father," she said presently; "will we be able to get a Christmas-tree for the children this year? It would make them so happy to have a Christmas-tree. You remember we did not have a tree last year."

"I wish we could get a tree, Mother," Mr. Jackson, who was sitting by the stove warming his feet, said. "I wish we could get a tree, but I have only forty-five cents, and you know there is no way of getting more money for a long time. I could buy a tree for that money, of course, but then there would not be any money with which to buy heads for those dolls you are making. Don't you think the girls would like dolls better than a Christmas-tree? They could have the dolls all the year around. The Christ-

mas-tree, on the other hand, would not last more than a week."

"Don't talk so loud, Father," Mrs. Jackson cautioned. "The children might hear you. They went to bed just a few minutes ago and they might not be fast asleep yet."

Then she went on softly, "If we cannot get both a Christmas-tree and doll heads, I think we had better just get the doll heads. But don't you think you might be able to get a horn and a little jew's-harp for Frank and Robert? It would make them so happy. I am knitting them some stockings for Christmas, but they would be so glad to get a little toy, too."

"Well, I will see. Don't you think I had better go to town tomorrow?"

The next day, after the supper dishes were done, Jane said, "Mother, may we make paper chains and fancy things for the Christmas-tree tonight?

We are going to have a Christmas-tree, aren't we?"

"I am afraid we can't have a Christmas-tree this year, Jane. But you can make some paper chains and other things if you like. We shall hang them around in the room, and that will give the house a Christmasy air."

So it was not long until three happy girls, Jane, Harriet, and Ella, were busy with papers, scissors, and paste. Jane had saved all year all the bright colored paper in which packages from the store had been wrapped.

"Just see how many colors we have!" Ella exclaimed. "They will make some pretty things, I know. Aren't you glad you saved the paper, Jane? We will make the house look pretty anyway, even if we don't have a Christmas-tree."

Of course Frank and Robert had to watch the making of the paper

chains, too. Even little William cried until he was placed in a high-chair near to the table so he could see the fun.

At last it was Christmas morning. Harriet was just rubbing her eyes when she heard a soft "swish, swish" downstairs. "Jane," she whispered softly, "Jane, listen! What is that?"

Jane listened. "It almost sounds as if someone were dragging a Christmas-tree on the ground. I wonder what it can be."

Then they heard some soft stepping around the room downstairs. Presently they heard their mother's voice: "Jane, Harriet, Ella, Frank, Robert,

William," she called; "hurry and get dressed. It is Christmas today."

Quickly the children slid into their shoes and stockings. Even more quickly they slid into their other garments. Mother dressed little William.

Harriet got downstairs first. "Whew!" she shouted, "A Christmas-tree; but it's a funny one."

"Pitter, patter; pitter, patter," came more than half a dozen feet behind Harriet. And more than half a dozen eyes looked toward one side of the room. There on the table stood a tree, but it was not a Christmas-tree. It was just a bare little tree that Mr. Jackson had cut down in the pasture. The paper chains and flowers and

other fancy things that the girls had made were hung on the tree. Several rosy apples hung by a string on the lower branches, and three doll faces looked out from under the tree. There was a red and blue horn, too; a shiny jew's-harp, a rattle made of a pepper-box, some stockings, and a bag of candy. Harriet's and Jane's dolls had black hair, and Ella's doll had yellow hair. It was the first doll Ella had ever owned. She pressed it in her arms and laughed and cried over it, she was so happy. Frank had to try his jew's-harp, Robert his horn, and little William his pepper-box rattle. Each one got an apple, too, and each one was dividing his attention between his toy and his apple.

"Uncle Fred sent the apples," Mother explained. "Wasn't that kind of him?"

All agreed that Uncle Fred was the best uncle anyone ever had.

After most of the excitement was over Mr. Jackson said, "Maybe I have another surprize. I received a letter from Mr. Orton when I was in town last time. He says that he will sell the farm just west of here, and we may have ten years in which to pay for it. Mother and I decided we would buy it. I thought that would be a nice Christmas surprize, so I did not tell you about it before. Perhaps we can have a real Christmas-tree after we have our own farm."

"Oh, and will you build a house on the new farm?" Harriet asked.

"Will it be our house?" Robert wanted to know.

"Yes," Father said; "we shall start building a house just as soon as it gets warm enough. But before we can build that house, I shall have to make a long trip for some cheap lumber."

"Oh, we'll take care of things while you are gone, Father," Jane assured him.

"Won't it be fun to live on a place where nobody but Indians ever lived!" Frank exclaimed after a while. "Didn't you say that no one but Indians ever lived there, Father?"

"Well," Father said, "Mr. Orton had a little hut there and stayed on the land a few weeks, but he never really made his home there. He stayed on the land just long enough to get it from the government after the Indians left it."

"Well, that is as good as if no one but Indians lived there," Frank said comfortingly.

Each one was amusing himself in his own way when Harriet said in a rather surprized tone, "I would like to know why you are carrying those apple seeds around, Jane. Can't you find a place to put them?"

"Why I am carrying these apple seeds around? I am going to plant them. We are going to have an apple orchard on our new farm. Where is that little box? I want to plant them right away. I can get some earth out of the cellar. Maybe we can have some tiny trees as soon as our new house is built."

All agreed that Jane's idea was a very good one, and Frank helped her find the box.

"Isn't this a happy Christmas!" Ella exclaimed at last. "You are a darling papa to have thought of that Christmas-tree."

CHAPTER II

Mr. Jackson Goes to the Woods

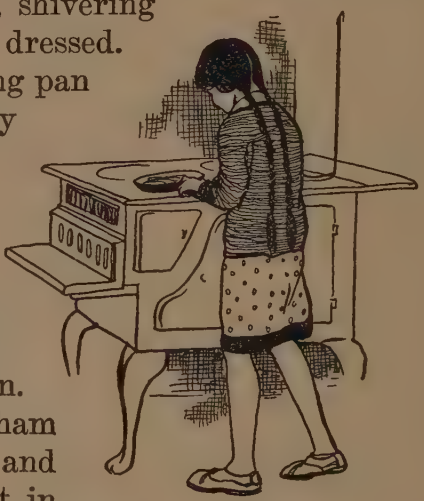
It was still very early in the morning, so early that it was still dark when Mrs. Jackson went down stairs and began to work in the kitchen. Mr. Jackson had got up still earlier and started a fire in the kitchen stove, for it was winter and very cold. This was the day that Mr. Jackson was going to the woods to get some lumber for the new house.

"Jane," Mrs. Jackson called after a while, "will you get up and help me get a lunch ready for Father?"

Jane was the eldest in the family, so of course she might expect to be called on occasions such as this.

Jane was so sleepy and the room was so cold that she did not like to

get up. But while she was rubbing her eyes she remembered that it was for the new house Father was going away. And she had promised Father that she would help. So Jane crawled out of bed, shivering while she dressed.



The frying pan was already sizzling on the stove with some ham in it when Jane came into the kitchen. Soon the ham was done and Jane put it in the basket for Father. Then they put in several loaves of bread, a big square of fresh country butter, and a dozen doughnuts. Father had said he would be gone several days and he must have

enough to eat until he got back to his family again.

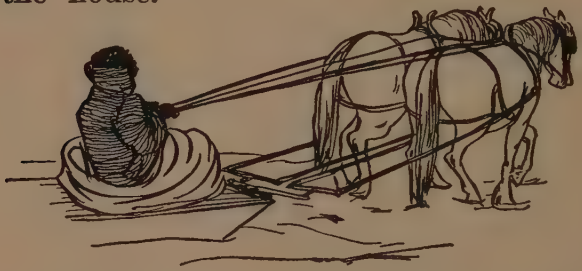
Even before Mother got the cover quite fastened on the basket they heard a "whoa" outside. Father was already driving up with his sled.

"You must have another hot drink before you go, Father," Jane said, as she placed a cup of steaming hot Postum on the table for him. "I am afraid you will freeze if you do not warm up good first," she continued.

Mr. Jackson drank the Postum that his daughter had set. "Thank you, Jane," he said. "It is a very cold morning and I shall need all the warmth I can start out with. Will you get me some more comforters too? I think if I wrap up well I shall be able to keep warm until I camp for the night."

At last Mr. Jackson was sitting on the front end of the sled, wrapped up to his arms in quilts. "Take good

care of the cows and pigs," he said. "I think I shall be back about Thursday. Good-by." And then he was off. Mother and Jane listened a while to the crunching of the snow under the horses' hoofs; then they went into the house.



"It will seem strange not to have Father near by, and not even to expect him in the evening," Jane said.

"Yes," Mrs. Jackson said, "it will seem strange. But we must get ready now to milk the cows. The pigs must be fed, too."

After the cows were milked the rest of the children were called for breakfast. Harriet and Ella were sent off

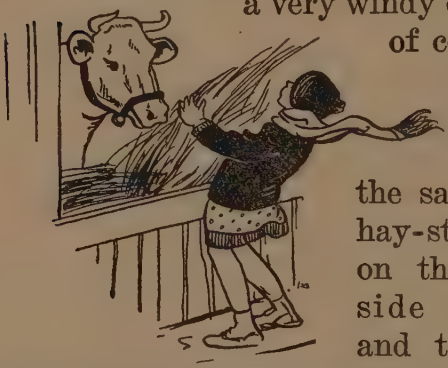
to school. Frank, Robert, and William were too small yet to go to school. Of course Jane had to stay at home. Someone had to help take care of the stock and the house.

"Will you bring my geography book along?" she said to Harriet. "I shall drop way behind in my lessons if I don't study at home." Harriet promised she would bring the geography book.

Jane wished she could go along to school when Harriet and Ella were leaving, but she decided that she would do all she could to get that new house built. And she would study her lessons at home.

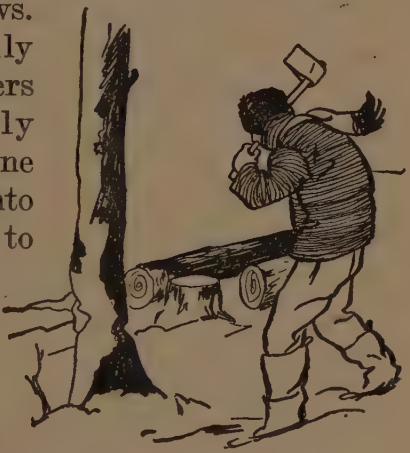
Mother and Jane were busy much of the day, but it seemed there was more work in the evenings than through the day. But, of course, in the evening there were more to help, too. Then Harriet prepared the supper and carried water from the pump into the house. Ella and Frank filled

the wood-box with wood and melted snow so they would have soft water in which to wash their face and hands the next morning. Robert kept William out of mischief and played with him so that he would not cry.



The day after Mr. Jackson left was a very windy day. But of course the cows had to be fed hay just the same. The hay-stack was on the north side at that, and that was the side from which the wind came. Jane tried to pull some hay out of the stack and put it on a little pile so she could carry it to the cows, but the wind blew so much of it away that there was not much left to carry. At last she tried pulling hay out near the

bottom of the stack and sitting on it till she had enough to carry. But even after she had it in her arms the wind snatched much of it away. It took a long time that evening for Jane to feed the cows. But finally the mangers were nearly full and Jane could go into the house to warm her numb fingers.



Forty miles away Mr. Jackson was in a tamarack woods. "Chug—chug—chug," went his ax. Then there was a creak, and the tall, straight tree hit the ground with a thump. Then Mr. Jackson looked for another straight tree that would make some good lumber for the

new house. When he had cut down enough trees he piled them on his sled and drove them to the sawmill near by. Here the trees were sawn into boards. When this was done Mr. Jackson paid the sawmill operator for his work and loaded the boards that had been trees on his sled again.

Now Mr. Jackson was ready to drive home. He got on top of the pile of lumber, set the basket, that was almost empty now, beside him, wrapped himself up well in the quilts, and started off.

"I wonder if Father is coming home tonight," Mrs. Jackson said, after the chores were all done. "Harriet, set some of the meat and potatoes back in the oven. Father might come home tonight. We should have a good, warm supper waiting for him."

"Papa is staying a long time," Robert ventured to say. "I think it was

Thursday a long time ago already."

"No, it was not Thursday a long time ago already," Harriet corrected him. "It is Thursday today. I guess little boys don't know that Thursday comes after Wednesday."

"But I think Father has been gone a long time already anyhow," Robert insisted.

At last the dishes were done. Mrs. Jackson was patching, Jane was studying her geography lesson; Harriet, Ella, Frank, and Robert were playing train around the heater that stood in the middle of the room.

"Whoa!" came a happy voice from out-of-doors. At that sound Mrs. Jackson dropped her patching, Jane dropped her geography book, and the "train" around the stove stopped suddenly. "Father is here! Father is here!" they shouted. In the next instant Mr. Jackson appeared in the door and seven pairs of arms were about him.

CHAPTER III

The New House Is Built

The snow was not all off the ground yet when Mr. Jackson began to build the new house. "It is pretty cold to begin work on the house already," Mrs. Jackson said. But Mr. Jackson just answered, "You know, Mother, we must have that house built by the time the frost is out of the ground. For as soon as the ground is thawed we must begin to break some land for our crop this year." (Mr. Jackson always said "break land" when he spoke of plowing land that had never been plowed before.)

So Mr. Jackson and a neighbor began to build the new house. One could hear from the old home, the "tap-tap" of the hammers. How Mrs. Jackson

and the children enjoyed the sound of the tapping of those hammers!

At last the walls were finished and the framework of the roof was up. It was beginning to look like a real house now. The sun shone a little warmer now, and several times when the girls had a few minutes after school when there was not some work waiting for them they walked over to see the new house.

One day when they had gone to see the new house again Ella said, "Just think, it is going to be our very own house. Won't it be lovely?" Then they walked around over the place that was going to be the yard.

"Where are we going to set out those apple trees that you planted in

the box last Christmas?" Harriet asked.

After talking over a suitable place they concluded that they had better let Father and Mother decide where the apple trees had best be planted.

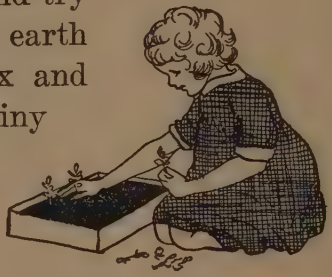
When the girls got home they found their mother sweeping up black earth from the front-room floor. She looked a little sad, too. "Why, what is the matter?" Harriet asked. "How did all that dirt get on the floor?"

"O Jane, I am so sorry," Mrs. Jackson managed to say. "I let William play by himself in the front-room while I was in the kitchen. Somehow he got hold of your apple-tree box and tipped it over onto the floor."

"Oh, I knew I should not have set the box on the sewing-machine," Jane sobbed. "I might have known that somebody would tip it over."

"I picked as many of the apple-tree plants out of the soil as I could.

You might try to plant them again," Mrs. Jackson said comfortingly. "But I am afraid they will not grow. They are too young to bear transplanting."



But Jane would try it. She put the earth back in the box and planted each tiny tree back again. She watered the plants carefully and set them out of the direct sunlight so they would not wither. But altho she coaxed and watched her tiny apple trees they wilted and would not grow.

"Never mind," Mother said, when it was evident that the apple trees would not grow; "never mind, dear, we can get some other trees. Uncle Fred said that those apple trees would never bear apples in this cold country anyway. Maybe the plum seeds that

Mrs. Rolland promised to give us for our new farm will grow."

"Yes," Harriet assented; "I should just as soon have plums like Mrs. Rolland grows than apples anyway, even if her plums are tamed wild plums."

"Well, don't forget to ask Mrs. Rolland for those plum seeds," Jane said with a chokey voice. "We ought to have fruit trees of some sort on our farm."

Mrs. Jackson did not forget. And the next time she called on Mrs. Rolland the good woman gave her a whole glassful of plum seeds.

"Let us wait until we can plant the seeds in the ground out-of-doors this time," Mrs. Jackson suggested. "Then no one can tip them out."

Meanwhile Mr. Jackson and the neighbor had built the house. It was really not finished yet. But enough work had been done on it that the family could live in it during the sum-

mer. Mr. Jackson could not wait until it was entirely finished because it was time to leave the old place. It was time to begin to break land on the new farm for the crops, too.

So they began to take the pictures off the walls, the dishes out of the cupboard, and the clothes from off the hooks. Everything that could be packed in trunks, boxes, and baskets was packed.

"I will need someone to help me carry the stove and the heavy furniture to the wagon," Mr. Jackson said the morning they were going to move. "Jane, you run over to Reeves' and ask George to come and help me."

Now, George was a big boy who teased Jane whenever he had a chance.

Jane did not like to go to Reeves' and ask for George at all. But she must do what she could to help; so she walked along the road to Reeves'.

It seemed as if her heart were in her throat and would jump into her mouth any minute when she rapped on the kitchen door at Reeves'. When Mr. Reeves opened the door for her she saw George sitting at the table eating his breakfast. He grinned at Jane when he saw her in the doorway and made some teasing remark. Jane wondered how she was ever going to tell this big teasing boy what her father had sent her to tell him. But at last she got boldness enough to say, "Father wishes you to come and help him load the stove and furniture on the wagon." Then George looked business-like and said he would come.

But before George could ever finish his breakfast Jane was on the road and running home as fast as she could.

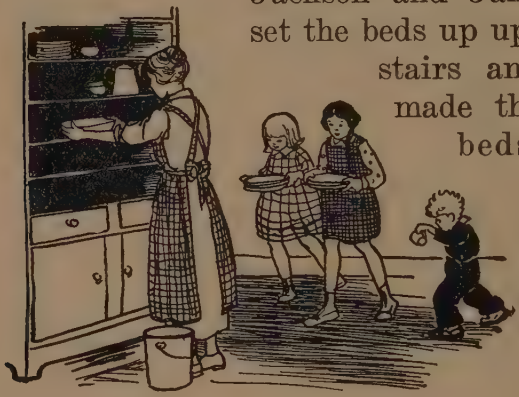
Presently George came, too, and soon the wagon was loaded. There was no room left on the wagon for anyone to sit except on top of the stove and on a small table in front where the driver would have to sit. So Mrs. Jackson said that Jane should sit on the stove and hold William. It was only a mile to the new place, so Mr. Jackson said George Reeves should drive and the rest should walk. Mrs. Jackson asked George if he could hold the little pail of milk in his hand while he was driving, to keep it from spilling. George said he could do that all right. So they started. Father carried Robert part of the way so that he would not get too tired. And when they came to a wet place Mother carried Ella because Ella had worn the soles of her shoes through, and her feet would get wet if she walked over the wet places.

It was a rather rough road over which they traveled. Really it was no

road at all. It was just fields and meadows, for it was really a new farm to which they were going, you know. Jane held William tightly beside her with one hand, while with the other hand she gripped the edge of the stove. All at once the front wheels of the wagon rolled into a shallow ditch, and Jane saw George fly off his seat and the milk from the pail spill all over him. Jane thought he looked so funny as he lay there bespattered with milk she wanted to laugh. But because it was George who looked so funny she thought she had better laugh some other time. Still when George began to laugh about it himself Jane laughed too. However, George soon picked himself up again, brushed the milk off his clothes as best he could, and a little later arrived at the new house.

Now everything had to be unloaded and unpacked. Harriet and Ella unpacked the dishes and put them back

in the cupboard which Mr. Jackson and George had put up. Mr. Jackson put the pipes on the stove and helped to set things around downstairs. Mrs. Jackson and Jane set the beds up upstairs and made the beds.



When it came time for supper to be prepared the matches could not be found, but everybody was too busy to get a warm supper anyway. So they just had some bread and butter that Harriet and Ella set on the table. And since the milk had been spilled they had to drink water instead. But every-

body was so happy to be in the new home they did not mind that. Before going to bed all knelt down among the boxes and the piles of clothes and thanked the heavenly Father for providing a new home for them and for bringing them safely there.

It was a group of tired boys and girls and a tired father and mother who climbed up the ladder to bed in the new home that night. Father had not had time yet to build the stairway. But no one minded that. This was their own home and they were happy.

CHAPTER IV

How Mr. Jackson Made a Bridge

There was no road to school from the new Jackson house. There was not even an Indian trail, for of course, the Indians that had lived on that farm had not gone to school. And there was water in every hollow from the rain. And, what was worse, the hollows were so close together that one could not always find a way through on the high spots. In fact there was a hollow all around the hilly place on which the house stood.

"How will the girls get to school?" Mrs. Jackson asked of her husband, after they were sufficiently settled in the new home for the girls to go to school. "They will surely get their feet wet. Even with rubbers they

would get wet, and you know they don't have any rubbers. The water is running several inches deep west of the house where they would have to cross. Can't you do something about it?"

Mr. Jackson thought he could. Soon the family heard him splashing some big rocks into the slough west of the house. He had his big boots on and walked along in the water and set each rock a short step ahead of the one next to it. Then he walked across on the rocks that he had placed there and tested each one to see that it would not shake or tip over. This was going to be the

"bridge" over which the girls were to go to school.

After this queer bridge was built Mr. Jackson came to the house. "Hello,

Ella," he said to his little white-haired daughter; "come and try the new bridge."

"Why, Papa, do you call those stones you threw into the water a bridge?"

"Yes, Ella, and I want to see if it

is a good bridge. If my little daughter can get across the water on that bridge I guess her older sisters can, too."

So Ella went with her father to the "bridge." At first Mr. Jackson held her hand while he walked beside her in his boots. Then he let her walk back and forth once by herself. Ella got to the homeward side without getting her little toes dipped in the water, and Mr. Jackson pronounced it a good bridge

"I guess the girls will be able to go to school all right," Mr. Jackson said as he and Ella walked in. "I have made a 'bridge' across the hollow."

"Yes, it is a good bridge," Ella chimed in. "It's made of stone, and I can walk it. I didn't get my foot wet even once."

"Oh, I am so glad we can go to school again," Jane exclaimed. "It seems like such a long time since we went to school."

"It really has been just a few days, Jane," her mother answered. "But you shall not stay home from school another day. You shall go to school tomorrow."

The three girls were up earlier than usual the next morning. Harriet packed their lunch in a small pail, while Jane tried to discover the hiding place of Ella's hat. After a while all the wraps, hats, pencils, and tablets were found. It was eight o'clock, and school did not begin until nine; so they would have time enough. Mrs. Jackson called a cheery good-by at the door and cautioned them to walk carefully over the stones and over the other wet places so that they would not get their feet wet.

The first difficult place over which they had to walk was the "stone bridge." Jane started out first. "Be careful," she called to Harriet and Ella; "step on the first stone with

your right foot, otherwise it won't come out right. If you step with your left foot first you will have to cross the right one over to get on the next stone, and then you will fall into the water."

Harriet and Ella followed Jane's advice, and soon all three girls were safe and dry on the other side.

"Why did Father always put one stone a little to the side of the next one?" Harriet asked.

"Just because it is easier to walk that way," Jane explained. "It would be much harder to keep balanced on those stones if one stone were in a straight line with the next one. You just have to be careful to start out right. Our feet are beside each other, you know, and not one directly ahead of the other. That's why Father put those stones down there like that."

There were many other wet places which the girls had to cross, but they

jumped from one high place to the next and got to school without getting their feet wet.

It was still fifteen minutes before school time when the girls arrived at the white schoolhouse. All the other children were there already. And all the girls and some of the boys were jumping rope. The boys had made the jumping-ropes from the willows that grew near. For each jumping-rope they had cut down two slim willow branches that could be tied together at the ends. For the smaller girls they made the two branches shorter, and for the bigger girls they made them a little longer. Each girl had a jumping-rope exactly her size.

When the Jackson girls arrived Tillie Rober called, "Boys, here are three more girls. Won't you make some jumping-ropes for them, too?" Albert Johnson and Emil Rolland were still whittling on some "jumping-

ropes." They brought these to the Jackson girls and said they might have them if they could tie the ends together. So Jane, Harriet, and Ella joined the rest of the girls in the rope jumping until the school-bell rang.

The day went by all too quickly for three girls who tried to make up what they had missed during the days they were moving. But school closed and they started home with the rest of the children. They could walk with some of the other children only a very short distance. Then they had to leave them and walk across the field where there were so many hollows with water in them. But they walked around the hollow places or jumped across from one tuft of grass to another. Once or twice Harriet missed the tuft of grass or the high place and

jumped in the water. But her feet were only a little wet when they got to the hollow near the house that had the stones in it.

"Watch me walk on the stones," Harriet said proudly as she started across ahead of Jane and Ella. She had not started out right and she did not step just right on a pointed rock that lay where the water was deepest. It began to wobble under her. Harriet grabbed the branches of a little willow bush that grew near to keep herself from falling into the water. But it did not save her. "Splash!" went one foot into the water. The water was cold. Quickly she pulled her foot out of the water

to place it on the next stone when "splash!" the other foot slipped into the water.

Jane and Ella did not say, "See what comes of your boasting," because they did not know what might happen to them when they came to that pointed rock. Jane grabbed the willow before she stepped on the rock, and by trying it carefully, she found out just how she must step so as not to make it wobble. Ella followed Jane's example, and that time Jane and Ella got home without getting their feet wet.

Harriet's shoes were so wet she made tracks all over the floor when she came into the house. "Why, Harriet," Mrs. Jackson exclaimed, "where did you get so wet? Take your shoes off at once. You will certainly take cold if you walk around in those wet shoes."

"Oh, how will I get to school tomorrow?" Harriet wailed.

"You will get to school tomorrow

just as you got to school today," Mrs. Jackson answered. "Put your shoes under the stove to dry. And tomorrow walk more carefully over those stones."

Harriet wanted to be sure that her shoes would be dry by the next morn-

ing, so she put some wood inside the oven and put her shoes on top of the wood in the oven. She left the oven door open so the shoes would not get too hot. A little later while William was playing near the stove he shut the oven door.

About supper time Mrs. Jackson

opened the oven to see if it was hot enough for the corn bread she had stirred up. To her surprize she saw Harriet's shoes steaming in the oven. "Oh, Harriet!" she called, "I believe your shoes are ruined. They are baking in the oven."

Harriet came flying to the kitchen. "Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Someone must have closed that oven door."

Just then Mr. Jackson came in. "What is all this fuss about?" he asked. When he was told about the shoes he said, "Why, Harriet, didn't you know better than to bake your shoes?"

"Well, someone closed the oven door," Harriet wailed.

"Let me see those shoes," Mr. Jackson demanded. After he had looked them over carefully he said, "I guess they were rescued just in time. They do not seem to be burnt yet. But be careful; don't try baking shoes again."

The next morning the family heard Harriet lamenting upstairs, "Oh, dear! Oh dear! What shall I do?" she cried over and over.

"What is the matter, Harriet?" Mrs. Jackson called.

"Oh, I can't get my shoes on," came from a tearful voice upstairs. "They are too small; and they are so stiff. They won't go on at all."

"That's what I expected," Mr. Jackson called back. "Shoes have a way of shrinking after they have been wet, especially when they have been dried like those were. Bring the shoes down, Harriet. I will see what I can do for them."

Then Mr. Jackson got some oil and a cloth. He rubbed the cloth that was dripping with oil over Harriet's shoes. He rubbed and rubbed until they were quite soft again. "Now," he said, after he had finished; "now see if you can get them on."

Harriet did get them on. Of course the shoes did not look shiny now, as they had before, and they pinched a little in one place, but she was very glad to have her shoes on again.

CHAPTER V

How the Jacksons Got Some Fish

A little while after the water was dried up in all the hollows there was no water for the cows to drink. Mr. Jackson had dug a shallow well on the new place before the new house was built, but it had almost dried up. Of course the cows must have water. No cows can give a lot of milk unless they have plenty of water to drink. What was to be done about it?

"We shall have to drive the cows to the river," Mr. Jackson said one day when he came in to dinner. "It is only a mile to the river. The cows can walk that far for a drink all right. I think I shall have to take them tomorrow. Jane and Harriet may come along to help. I think the cows will give no

trouble after they have been there once. After that Jane and Harriet can take them down alone."

The cows were taken to their new watering-place the next morning. It

scared Harriet terribly to see some of the cows jump into the river where the bank was steepest. And when Bloomie, her pet cow, jumped in, Harriet began to cry, "Oh, Bloomie; oh, Bloomie, what shall I do?" But Bloomie seemed to be perfectly happy.

She drank as if water had never tasted so good.

After the cows had got somewhat acquainted with the river they did not jump down the steep banks anymore. After that they followed the road that led into the river. You see there was no bridge across the river anywhere near. People who wanted to get to the other side of the river simply drove through the water. To this place Jane and Harriet drove the cows every morning until the new well would be finished.

There was a fish-trap in this part of the river, too. A few years before the Indians had built a dam across the river and had placed fish-traps in it. They had made the traps of sticks of wood in the shape of a box. The cracks between the sticks of wood were just wide enough to let all the little fish through the trap, but not so wide as to let any big ones through. The

dam the Indians had built of rocks. Only little fish could get through the holes between the rocks. The fish-traps were so placed in the dam that all the big fish would swim into them. Once they were in the box of sticks they could not get out.

No one had ever taken this fish-trap out of the river or torn the dam up; so it was still there. Every morning when Jane and Harriet drove the cows to the river they walked over the dam to the fish-trap to see if there were any fish. But there were no fish those first few days.

"I believe somebody always gets here before we do," Jane said to Harriet one morning. "I hope some day we can come here before anybody else does and get a lot of fish."

"Yes, I do too," Harriet replied. "Wouldn't it be fun to bring some fish home some day?"

The very next day Good Fortune

was waiting for Harriet and Jane. Harriet ran along the dam to the trap first. "Oh, Jane," she called, "come quick. The whole trap is full of fish." Jane walked quickly to the trap. Sure enough; there were at least fifteen fish in the trap. Of course the trap was really not full, but fifteen fish was a terrible big lot to two girls just eleven and nine years old.

"But how will we get them out?" Harriet asked.

"Why, just catch them," Jane said.

Harriet tried to grab some of them with her hands but they were so slippery it was quite a while before she caught one. She put it on the dam, while she grabbed for some others. But the girls soon saw that that would not do. For the fish flopped and flopped on the dam and soon flopped back into the river. "Well, I should like to know how we are going to get those fish home even if we do get them

out of this trap," Harriet said. But Jane was thinking. "Oh, I have an idea," she exclaimed finally. I have seen boys carry fish strung on a willow branch for a string. Let's string them

on our 'driving stick' and carry the stick between us."

The "driving stick" was a smooth, strong stick with which the girls whipped the cows when they would not go where they should.

This time when the cows started in the wrong direction both girls with the stick of fish between them ran after

the cows. But the cows did not give much trouble, and soon two proud girls walked to the house with the stick of fish between them. "Won't Mother open her eyes when she sees these fish?" Harriet whispered.

Just then the door opened and Mrs. Jackson came out. "Well, of all things," she exclaimed. "Did you catch those fish?"

"Indeed we did," both girls answered at once. "Can't we have some for dinner today?"

"We could have some for dinner well enough," Mrs. Jackson said, "but I do not have time to clean them before dinner."

"I will clean them, Mother," Jane said; "I have done it before, you know."

"Very well; if you will clean them you shall have some fish for dinner."

"When Mr. Jackson came home from plowing his new land, three lit-

tle boys ran to the barn to tell Father about the fish. "Papa, Jane and Harriet brought home a lot of fish," Frank said excitedly.

"Yes, a whole load of fish," Robert added.

"Load of fish," echoed William.

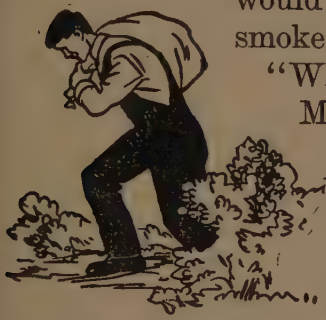
"Well, well, are we going to have fish for dinner?"

"Yes," Frank replied; "Jane is frying them now."

"These are some fine fish," Mr. Jackson said when the family was seated at the table. "We ought to get a lot of them now while they are running. They would make good meat next winter. That little pig we are going to keep for ourselves will not make very much meat. We ought to sell all the rest of the pigs. We shall have to get some money out of them to buy lumber to finish the house."

"But wouldn't the fish spoil if we catch them now?" Harriet asked.

"We will smoke them," Mr. Jackson explained. "I guess you children have never tasted smoked fish. You don't know how good they are. I tell you I would like to have some smoked fish right now."



"What do you say, Mother," he inquired of Mrs. Jackson, "if I go to the fish-trap tomorrow morning before anyone else gets up?" Mrs. Jackson thought it might be a good idea.

The next morning before the children were awake Mrs. Jackson called, "Girls, just look out of the window." Jane, Harriet, and Ella got up hurriedly and looked out. "Oh, see how Father is walking," Ella exclaimed. "He is all bent over."

"Ah, I believe he has a whole sack of fish on his back," Jane said. She had

guessed quite right. Mr. Jackson was stooped over from the heavy weight of fish on his back.

Jane and Harriet helped their mother clean the fish and put them in salt brine. When they were quite salted Mrs. Jackson hung as many of the fish as she could in an empty barrel. The ones they could not hang in the barrel remained in the salt until later. The barrel had both ends out. A little fire with a great deal of smoke was made at the bottom of the barrel and a cover placed on the other end. Jane started the smoke every morning before she went to school, and Mrs. Jackson put more sawdust on the smoke several times a day so as to keep the smoke going.

"How nice it will be to have smoked fish whenever we want it," Mrs. Jackson said one day after the girls had come home from school. "I haven't looked at the fish today yet. I wonder

f they are not smoked about enough."

Jane went along with her Mother o look at the fish. They took the cover off. "Oh, what happened to the fish?" Mrs. Jackson said somewhat surprized when she saw no fish on the strings. "I believe they fell into the fire." The next moment she lifted up the barrel. Yes, the fish were lying on the fire. They were almost burned to a cinder.

"Now our fish are spoiled," Jane said sorrowfully. "But I think the fault is all in the barrel. The smoke can't help but get too hot in there."

When Mr. Jackson came home that evening Mrs. Jackson told him about the fish. "I am afraid we never can smoke fish in that barrel," she said.

"Well, maybe not," Mr. Jackson replied. "But I think something might be done to it so you could. If we would have the smoke in a kind of oven made of stones and earth with a pipe leading into the barrel, I think it might work."

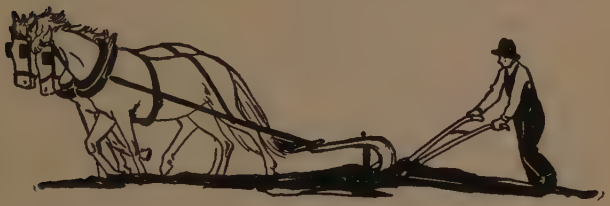
Early the next morning Mr. Jackson was working on the new smokehouse. When it was done Jane helped her mother hang some more fish in the barrel.

After this when the girls came home in the evening they lifted the top off of the barrel to see if the fish were still there. Every evening the fish were still there, and every evening they looked browner and browner. At last they were smoked through and the girls could have a piece of smoked fish in their school lunch. Since they had helped to catch the fish and helped to smoke them they thought smoked fish a very good food.

Many times that summer and winter when the Jackson family returned thanks at the table they thanked God for the good fish.

CHAPTER VI

What Grew on the New Farm



Mr. Jackson had turned over many acres of grassy ground. Frank had followed his father back and forth along many a furrow. He was six now, and he liked to see the green grass tip over before the plow.

"I am nearly big enough now to help you a lot," Frank said as he followed his father around at his work. "The girls can help a little too, but when I get big I am going to help like a real man. Don't you think I could

plow pretty soon, Daddy? Then you wouldn't have to work so hard."

Mr. Jackson thought he might surely help much pretty soon if in the meantime he would eat his rolled oats for breakfast every morning. "It is the oats that helps horses to be so strong, you know," his father explained.

"Then I am going to eat lots of oats," Frank declared enthusiastically. "I am going to be strong like the horses. Then I can help you, Daddy; can't I?"

Wheat, barley, oats, flax, and turnips were planted in the new fields. To be sure the wheat and the oats were important, but that was not all that was important. There must be some flowers that one could see from the south window. Now there was nothing but wild grass from the south window." "Mother, can't we plant some mari-

golds near the south window?" Jane asked one day.

"Of course you could have marigolds there if they would grow," her mother said, "but marigolds won't grow in the grass."

"But wouldn't marigolds grow there if the earth were spaded up?" Jane went on.

"Yes, of course, if the earth were spaded up; but Father has no time. You see how he is busy in the fields early and late. I can't do it with all the gardening and mending and cooking that I have."

"But why couldn't I do it?" Jane pleaded.

"It is terribly hard work, spading up that grassy sod, Jane."

"But, Mother, please, couldn't I try it?"

"Well, if you think you can do it, you might try it, of course," her mother assented.

So Jane tried it. It really was terribly hard work. She had to sit down to rest very often. But every day she spaded, hoed, and raked for a little while. At last she had one little, round bed made. Frank and Ella helped

carry some small stones which she placed all around the outside of her bed. The stones were to mark the flower bed and make it look pretty. Then she carefully planted her marigold seeds. The marigolds really grew, and in the fall there were several bouquets of marigolds for the dinner table.

Besides the flowers there were Jane's and Harriet's garden plots. Their plots were just a little corner off the small piece of ground in front of the house. Mr. Jackson had prepared this ground to serve as the kitchen garden the first summer. But since Jane and Harriet were the eldest, Mrs. Jackson said they might each have a little piece of it. Jane planted cabbages in her garden. She said she wanted the cabbages because she could sell them and get some money for the missionaries. Harriet planted carrots. Harriet liked carrots, and she decided that if she raised carrots she might go to her garden and pull some carrots to eat any time she wanted some.

Lettuce, onions, peas, cucumbers, radishes, and other things were planted in that kitchen garden. But the most important part of that garden was not where the lettuce grew; it was not where the onions or the peas grew,

and it wasn't where the cucumbers and the radishes grew. The most important part of that garden was where the plum seeds had been planted.

"I wish those plums would come up," Harriet said impatiently. "It seems like such a long time since we planted them."

"You shall have to wait a little longer yet," Mrs. Jackson answered. "I think they will come up all right, but they must lie in the ground all winter. The frost and moisture will crack the seeds and next spring we shall have some tiny plum trees."

So of course there was a little bare spot in the garden that first summer. But it was about that bare spot that the children talked the most. Ella even tried to explain the mystery of that little bare spot to William. Frank and Robert thought they understood it perfectly. Why, of course, next year there would be some tiny plum trees.

Those tiny plum trees would grow to be bigger plum trees, and on these bigger plum trees there would be plums. Wouldn't they watch that spot next spring tho! Everyone wanted to be the first to see a little plum tree peek through the ground.

CHAPTER VII

The Indians Pay Them a Visit

Everybody worked on the Jackson farm during the summer-time—everybody except Baby William. Jane helped her father and mother in the garden and field in whatever way an eleven-year-old girl could. Frank and Ella drove the cows on the green grass every day, and watched them so they would not run on the fields and eat the wheat and turnips, and so they would not run to the neighbors' farms. Mr. Jackson had not yet been able to make a large enough fence for the cows. Harriet stayed at home to sweep and dust the house, to carry water to the chickens, and to start the dinner. Robert played with William and watched him so he would not get hurt.

You see the farm and the new house were not paid for yet, and everybody was very glad to work so as to save

the money that otherwise would have to be paid to hired help.

One day while Mrs. Jackson and Jane were hoeing the potatoes in a field a little distance from the house they saw some people in queer-looking

wagons drive up to the door. "Mother, I believe they are Indians,' Jane said. "Only Indians have wagons like that."

"I don't suppose they will do any harm," Mrs. Jackson said.

"No, I don't suppose so," Jane replied. "The histories tell of some terrible things they did years ago, but Mr. Johns knows some Indians not very far from here, and he says they never do any harm."

So Mrs. Jackson and Jane began hoeing again. But every little while Mrs. Jackson looked up. "It seems to me they are stopping a long time," she said after a while. "I must go home to see what they are doing." And she started across the field at a rapid pace. Jane followed. Perhaps, after all, the Indians had done some of the terrible things the histories tell about.

When Jane and her mother had almost reached the house they saw the Indians climb into their funny wagons

and drive off. Jane and her mother ran the rest of the way. They wondered what the Indians had done in the house and where the children were.

When they got into the house they saw Harriet, just as composed as could be, clearing off the table. "What did the Indians want? How does it come you are clearing off the table?" Mother and Jane asked excitedly.

"Why, they just wanted something to eat," Harriet said calmly, "so I set the table for them. One of the girls

could talk English, and she said they would like some bread and butter and tea. The other Indians could not talk English. I used up all the tea you keep for company, but the Indians liked it. And they asked me if we had any jelly, so I brought them a glass of jelly, and they ate it all. I guess they were awfully hungry."

"That was the last of my jelly," Mrs. Jackson said when Harriet had finished her story. "Now we shall have none; but I am glad the Indians took my jelly and not my children."

"Weren't you afraid when the Indians drove up?" Jane asked of Harriet after a while.

"Why should I have been afraid?" Harriet said. "They just wanted something to eat. It was lots of fun to see them eat, even if we are not going to have any jelly now."

CHAPTER VIII

When They Had Done Their Part

It was not easy for Harriet to stay home and do all the work, for the one who stayed at home had to wash and wipe all the dishes, sweep the floor, pare the potatoes for dinner—and there were always a lot of potatoes to pare—start the fire in the kitchen stove, and set the potatoes on the fire. If Mother or Jane did not come home early Harriet had to gather the eggs, feed the little chickens, and see that they were all safe in their coops for the night. Har-

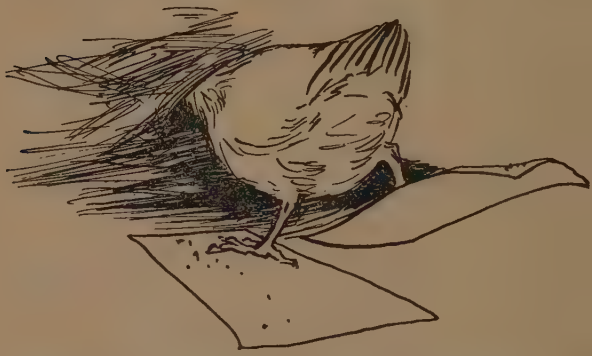
riet was nearly ten years old now, but just the same that was a lot of work. And besides Harriet did not like washing dishes. If there was one thing Harriet disliked most of all it was washing dishes. But, just the same, Harriet wanted to do her part in helping to finish the house and pay for the farm, and so of course she was willing to wash the dishes.

Since there was always plenty to do Harriet was never lonesome. Of course there were not always Indian visitors to make the day interesting, but other queer things happened sometimes. One day when Frank and Ella were still at home a hen walked through the open door into the house. When Harriet saw the hen she called "shoo! shoo!" and tried to chase her out. But Biddy got excited and forgot where the door was, and flew on the table instead. Now it happened that Harriet had placed a sheet of sticky fly-paper on

the table, with which to catch flies. Of course old Biddy did not know that the fly-paper was not intended for chickens, and she flopped her wings right onto the sticky fly-paper. To be sure the fly-paper stuck to her feathers. This excited Biddy all the more, and the result was that she half flew,

half fell, cackling out of an open window. When Harriet and the other children saw the fly-paper stuck to the hen they ran after her to catch her and pull the fly-paper off. The other chickens got excited too and ran cack-

ling after the hen with the fly-paper. All this so frightened the hen that Harriet, Ella, Frank, and Robert running after her with all their might



could not catch the hen. However, at last in her fright she ran against a hay-stack and poked her head into the hay. Harriet was upon her in a moment and released her from the fly-paper.

It all seemed very funny after it was over, and they all laughed and laughed about it for a long time.

That evening Father, Mother, and

Jane stayed especially long on the field, because it was Saturday and they wanted to get all the work done. Frank and Ella had brought the cows home long ago, but Mr. and Mrs. Jackson had not come home yet. Mrs. Jackson had said to Harriet in the morning, "We may stay late tonight. If we do, you can milk Bloomie, so you will have milk for supper. You need not milk any more than what you and the children will want to drink."

Harriet waited until it was nearly dark. She thought Father and Mother and Jane would surely come any minute, and she would not need to milk Bloomie. But when Robert and William began begging for something to eat, and Frank said, "I'm so hungry I can't wait any longer," she took a small milk-pail and went to the pasture to find Bloomie. Altho it was rather dark already Harriet did not have any trouble finding Bloomie, for

Bloomie was a red and white cow, with more white than red. Harriet had tried milking just a little bit a few times and she did not know whether she could get enough for supper or not. But Bloomie was very patient, and before very long Harriet had enough milk in her pail so each of the children could have at least one cupful.

When she returned to the house she cut bread and poured milk for each of the children. As soon as they had eaten all the bread and milk they wanted she cleared the table off. It was quite dark now and the children were beginning to feel lonesome. They wondered what was keeping Father and Mother so long.

"Perhaps if we look out of this window we can see them come," Harriet suggested.

And since the table was opposite the window and there was little space between the table and window they all

lay down on the table with their heads near the window so they could see the road where Father and Mother and Jane would come.

Sometime later the door opened and Mr. Jackson called out, "What's the matter here; the house is all dark!" He struck a match and held it aloft. In the light of the match he saw five forms lying on the table—asleep. They had done their part and had gone to sleep waiting for Father and Mother.

CHAPTER IX

Jane Goes on a Sixteen-Mile Errand

"I thought I bought enough nails for the new barn when I was in town the last time," Mr. Jackson said one day, "but I find that there are not quite enough to finish the barn. I wonder if Jane could go to town tomorrow and get a few pounds of nails. If I am to get that barn finished before cold weather I dare not lose a day, for in two or three days I shall have to cut the oats on the south lot and then I can't build. She might take the horses, but Nellie has hurt her foot, you know, and can't walk. And anyway it would be dangerous for Jane to drive the horses through town."

"Yes, it would be dangerous for

Jane to drive the horses through town, but how is she going to get there if she doesn't take them?" Mrs. Jackson asked.

"Well, Jane is a pretty good walker," Mr. Jackson replied. "I think she could walk to town."

"But, Father," Mrs. Jackson went on, "you must remember it is eight miles to town, and just as far coming back. Jane would have to walk sixteen miles. How can the child walk so far?"

"Well, let's ask Jane," Mr. Jackson suggested. "Let's see what she thinks about it."

Jane said she was sure she could walk so far. "And I am sure I would not get lost either," she added; "for I have often gone with Father and I know just exactly which roads to take."

So it was decided Jane should go to town the next day. Before she started off Mr. Jackson gave her the money for the nails, and five cents more; for

he said, "You must buy some crackers or buns to eat before you start back."

"Yes, and you must sit down and rest awhile before you start back," Mrs. Jackson added.

So Jane started to town dressed in the black cape-suit her mother had made, and the blue hat she had trimmed for her. When Jane reached Riverton she bought the nails and the crackers her father told her to buy, and she sat down and rested in one of the stores, as her mother had told her. After eating her crackers and watching the people and clerks in the store for a while she started home

with the nails. But no one who saw Jane knew she was carrying nails, for she hid them under her cape so no one would see them. Jane was a little ashamed of the nails because she thought only boys should carry nails.

Jane had not gone far out of Riverton when a man and a woman in a carriage drove up behind her. There were not yet many automobiles on those roads and most people drove in carriages. The man stopped his horses when the carriage rolled alongside of Jane and he called, "Would you like a ride?"

"Thank you," Jane said, and walked to the carriage. She tried to climb into the carriage while she hid the nails under her cape with one arm, but she could not get into the carriage. The man was sitting on the opposite side from where Jane tried to step in, so he could not help her.

"Oh, have you broken your arm?" the man said sympathetically.

"No, my arm is all right," Jane replied, blushing a little. Then, taking the package from under her cape she put it in the carriage. With her load thus deposited she swung herself easily into the carriage.

"Why, what is it?" the man said, referring to the package. "Oh, I believe it is nails."

Then Jane told the man and his wife that her father was building a barn and could not come to get the additional nails that were needed. She also told them where she lived.

"Do you mean to say that you live eight miles from Riverton," the man asked, "and that you walked all the way?"

"Yes, sir," Jane said meekly.

"You are a very brave girl indeed," the man said. "Even a boy might be proud of making such a trip for some

nails, and you are a girl. I am sure I should have to go a long way to find another girl so brave and ready to help."

After he talked so, Jane felt better about the nails.

The man and his wife could not take Jane more than one mile because they had to take another road. But Jane thanked them just as politely as she could and walked the rest of the way.

When she came to the house Mr. Jackson came from the barn to ask how Jane had got along. The boys crowded around her too.

"Was it awful far?" Robert asked.

"Did you see any Indians?" was Frank's question.

"Did you bring candy?" William inquired.

Jane was sorry that she had not saved just a cent or two from her cracker money and bought William some candy. But she had been so hun-

gry that even when she spent all of the five cents for crackers it was hardly enough.

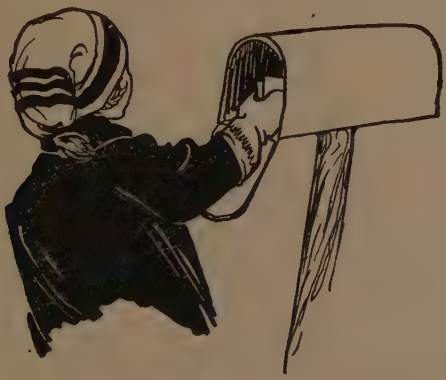
Mrs. Jackson quickly heated some stew that had been left over from dinner as she said, "You must be very hungry, Jane. Here is some good hot stew for you."

Jane was very happy as she ate her stew. She had had a big chance to help that day, and the man had said, "It was brave of you to bring the nails."

CHAPTER X

A Lamp in the Window

Winter had come and gone with its snow, and it was late summer once more.



"A letter from Grandma Heath!" Harriet announced one afternoon as she returned from the mail-box.

Mrs. Jackson quickly opened the letter. "Oh, my dear children," she said

when she had finished reading it. "The letter says that Grandma is very, very sick, and that I had better come at once if I want to see her alive."

Now, the quickest way for Mrs. Jackson to get to her mother, who lived twenty miles away, was to drive there with horse and buggy. So it was decided that Mr. and Mrs. Jackson

would start on the trip early the next day and take the new baby sister, little Olive, along. And it was thought that Ella had better go along too, to take care of little sister. That would leave

Jane and Harriet and the three boys at home. Father and Mother said they would be gone at least three days, but Jane assured them that they would get on all right at home and that they would try not to be lonesome. So after giving Jane and Harriet instructions about taking care of things in their absence, they started off.

Jane and Harriet watched the buggy until it disappeared behind the trees. After all it gave them a queer feeling to think that Father and Mother would be gone for three days. But they did not dare think of that very long, for now they must do much of Father's and Mother's work besides their own.

"I think we had better begin work right away," Jane suggested when the Jackson carriage could no longer be seen."

First of all the little chickens had to be fed. Then there were the everlasting dishes to wash and the rooms

to sweep. But after a while the morning's work was done and Jane and Harriet went into the garden to "watch things grow," as they said. The little plum trees were already a few inches tall. The

sisters wondered how much taller they would have to grow before they would bear plums. But they could not stay long in the garden, for it was soon time to get dinner.

After dinner there seemed to be a pile of things to do. The little chicks had to be fed again, and the pigs had to be fed. The pail with the feed for the pigs was heavy, but Jane and Harriet carried it between them, and so they were able to get it to the pen. The girls never guessed that there could be quite so much to do. And to make matters worse Old Dan, the horse, who had been left home alone, took a notion to open the pasture gate and stray to the neighbor's. It was fortunate that Jane saw him before he had gone very far, and she went after him. When she returned him into the pasture it was five o'clock.

Now it was time to gather the eggs, feed the pigs once more, and milk the cows.

After the work was done a sort of lonesome feeling crept over the girls. It seemed so strange not to expect their parents home for the night. Jane sug-

gested that they get the hymn book and sing. The boys sat around close to their sisters, for they felt strange and lonesome too. After they had sung most of the songs they knew they all kneeled beside their chairs, as Father and Mother always did when they were at home, and asked God to take care of them. All but William kneeled to pray, for William had fallen asleep during the singing and had to be carried up-stairs to bed. Soon the others were in bed also, and sound asleep.

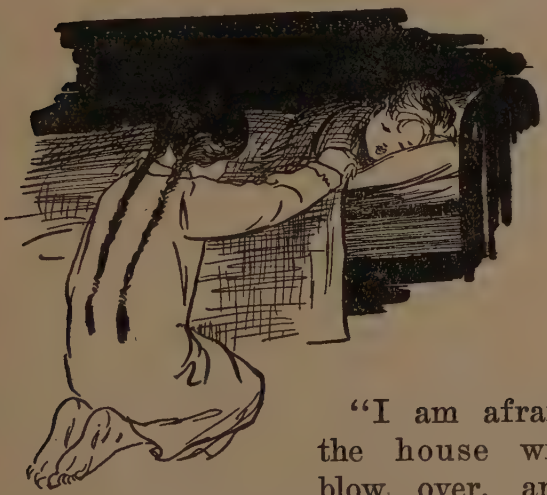
The next day was much like the first, except that it was very windy. It got windier and windier. In the evening they could see the kerosene in the lamp shaking back and forth from the rocking of the house. It gave them a very uncomfortable feeling. They wondered if the house would blow over.

Harriet said, "Let us not sing tonight. I am scared."

They soon went to bed, but Jane

could not go to sleep because she felt the house shaking. Soon she heard a sob from the room where the boys slept, and she tip-toed in to see about it. She found Frank crying.

"What is the matter?" Jane asked.



"I am afraid the house will blow over, and Mother is not here," came from a choky voice.

"But God is here," Jane assured him. "We will ask God not to let the

house blow over." Then she knelt down beside Frank's bed and asked God to take care of them that night and not let the house blow over. After that Frank went to sleep.

The third day was the day that Mr. and Mrs. Jackson were to come home. That day seemed rather long because they were waiting so eagerly for evening to come, when Father and Mother would come home. In the afternoon that queer, lonesome feeling came over Jane again, and she got the hymn book and sat down outside and sang. The queer feeling made the tears come into her throat, and even into her eyes sometimes so she could hardly sing. But she brushed back the tears and sang on. And she prayed in her heart that God would send her parents home safely.

At last the evening work was done. Supper was over and the dishes were put away, but Mr. and Mrs. Jackson

had not come home. It got pitch dark but still they had not come.

"I think we had better put the lamp in the window so they can see the house and know where the road turns off," Jane suggested. And she placed the lamp on the window-sill. After a while the clock struck nine—it struck ten, but Mr. and Mrs. Jackson had not come home. Jane told the younger children to undress and go to bed, while she lay down with her clothes

on, so that she might be ready to greet her parents and help them when they arrived. But soon she, too, fell asleep.

Jane did not know how long she had been sleeping when she heard the rattle of carriage wheels outside. In an instant she was down-stairs.

"Well, you have chosen a late hour to come home," she said teasingly, as her mother appeared in the door, and then—"Why, Mother, you are all wet. What has happened?"

"You can thank God that we are here at all," Mrs. Jackson answered. And then she explained that some naughty boys had placed a log over a little bridge which they had to cross, and that in the black darkness the

horses tried to walk around the log, and in so doing walked into the ditch. Of course the carriage tipped over into the ditch. Mr. Jackson and Ella flew clear across the ditch and landed on the other side, while Mrs. Jackson and the baby fell into the ditch that was full of water. When they fell, Olive flew out of her mother's arms and Mrs. Jackson could not find her in the darkness. Mrs. Jackson was afraid her baby was drowning in the water. But when she found her at last, Olive was not even wet, she had been wrapped up so well.

"And how I thank God that you set the lamp in the window," Mrs. Jackson went on. We surely would have turned into the ditch instead of turning off on our road if we had not seen the light, for it was so dark that we could not see where the road turned off. That might have been a worse accident than the first." And it really

might have been, for the ditch across which the last short stretch of road led was very steep and deep.

Jane took care of Olive, who stretched out her little hands for her and cried, while Mrs. Jackson got into some dry clothes and got things ready for Mr. Jackson when after he would put the horses in the barn he would come in. In the meantime she told Jane that they had prayed for Grandma Heath and that Grandma was much better and would probably get well again.

When the lamps had been put out once more and everybody was under warm covers Jane heard her mother pray, "Dear heavenly Father, I thank thee for bringing us back safely to our family and letting no real harm come to us. I thank thee for letting no one get hurt when we fell into the ditch, and for the lamp in the window that led us home."

CHAPTER XI

The House Takes Fire

Bread! Bread! Bread! How many slices of bread her family ate in a day Mrs. Jackson did not know. She only knew that she had to bake bread every

few days. Of course there were several mouths to feed, and they seemed most of the time to be hungry mouths, too.

It was bread-baking day again. A hot fire was roaring in the kitchen stove, for the loaves were soon ready to set in the oven. All at once the roar seemed not to be in the stove, but in the pipes and chimney. Mrs. Jackson felt the pipes. They were very hot. She ran out-of-doors to look at the chimney. The next instant she cried, "Fire! fire! The house is burning!"

The boys and girls came running. "Call Father!" Mrs. Jackson cried to Jane.

Fortunately Mr. Jackson was plowing not very far from the house, and Jane ran until she was close enough for him to hear her call. As soon as Mr. Jackson understood he left his horses and came running.

In the meantime Mrs. Jackson and Harriet were frantically pumping water into the big trough. When Mr. Jackson reached the yard he snatched the long ladder and ran to the house.

"Water! Water!" he called. "Bring water! Bring water!"

Quickly everybody grabbed a bucket and formed a bucket brigade. Mrs. Jackson pumped more water. Ella carried water from the pump until she met Harriet. Then Harriet grabbed Ella's full pail and gave her her own empty one to fill, while she carried the full pail to Jane, who was on the ladder. Jane reached it up to her father, who was on the roof, pouring the water on the flames.

At last the fire was extinguished. "God be thanked," Mr. Jackson murmured as he came down the ladder, and then aloud he said to his wife and children, "Our house almost went that time. We have reasons to thank God for not letting it burn up."

The flames had not spread very far. However, they had burnt a hole through near the chimney. But Mr. Jackson was so busy in the fields that

fall that he did not have time to mend the hole in the roof. The hole was right over the bed where Jane and Harriet slept. When the girls asked if the hole were going to be mended, Mr. Jackson said teasingly, "I thought you liked fresh air so well. What's the objection

to having a little come through that hole?" So the hole stayed there into the winter.

One cold wintry morning while Mrs. Jackson was getting breakfast she heard a queer sound come from upstairs. "Ooh-ooh-ooh," somebody was crying. "There is snow on my bed and I put my bare arm right into it." It

was Harriet. She had been lying beneath the hole, and while she had hidden herself under the covers during the night, the snow had fallen softly through the hole and on the bed. So Harriet had a rather cool and sudden waking up that morning.

But no one really minded the hole in the roof very much because Mr. Jackson said he believed there would be money enough to build the house larger next fall, and then there would be a roof without holes, and another

large room and two porches besides.

That winter the girls often hurried home from school in order that they might sew strips of clean rags together and braid them for rugs for the new room. Mrs. Jackson said she would sew the braids together into rugs.

After the new room and the porches were finished it was decided that the house should be painted too. Heretofore there had never been quite enough money to paint the house. "What color shall we paint the house?" Mr. Jackson asked one evening when it was decided that the house should be painted.

"I like yellow," Mrs. Jackson said. "Yellow will look pretty against the green trees. The trimmings could be painted white."

"Yellow is like the sunshine," Ella chimed in. "Let's paint it yellow."

"I agree," Mr. Jackson said, "for yellow looks warm and inviting."

So it was decided to paint the house yellow. Mr. Jackson brought the paint the next time he went to town. But Mr. Jackson could not paint the house because he had to work in the fields. Still that did not matter much as long as Jane was there, for Jane was sure she could learn how to do it. At least she could paint all but the gables, she said, and perhaps Father could find time to do them.

The house really looked pretty against the green trees after it was painted. And everyone of the Jacksons enjoyed looking at it whenever they came riding or walking home, for hadn't they all helped to build it?

CHAPTER XII

Visitors at the Jackson Home

Several years had passed since the house had taken fire. Jane and Harriet and Ella were young ladies now, and the boys had grown tall.

"Just listen to this," Jane said as she held up a paper. Several of the Jackson boys and girls were lounging or reading in the cozy parlor after dinner. "I have found something good," Jane continued. "There is a short article in this paper that tells what different colors signify. It says, 'A yellow house signifies hospitality.' It almost seems as if that might be true, for could anybody be more hospitable than Father and Mother? Father will take in anybody and scarcely ever let anybody pay for staying, either."

"I think even Harriet is hospitable," Ella added. "Do you remember the time she fed the Indians our last glass of jelly?" Ella's remark sent a ripple of laughter around the room.

"I wonder if the tramp who came here last week knew that a yellow house signifies hospitality," Robert said with a twinkle.

"How did that tramp get here? I never did hear about it," Frank, the eldest brother put in.

"I think yellow must have signified hospitality to others besides the tramp," Harriet explained. "Mrs. Simms asked me today if a tramp had come to our house last week. I looked so surprized to think she knew anything about the tramp, and she said that Mr. Simms had found the tramp in their barn one evening. He had meant to sleep in the hay during the night. Mr. Simms told him he could have no strangers around his barn, but

if he wanted a place to stay he should go to the yellow house. 'They take in everybody at the yellow house' he said. So I suppose there was nothing for the man to do but to come here. If he didn't know before that a yellow house signifies hospitality, perhaps he knows it now."

"We call him a tramp," Jane said; "but I believe he was just as good as anybody else is; only he was out of work and tried to find a cheap place to sleep. Well, anyway, I am glad the yellow house did not disappoint him."

There were other visitors that summer, as there had been visitors before. One of them was a minister who visited the country districts to establish and encourage family worship. He had found so few homes lately where there was family worship that he supposed there were no family prayers at the yellow house either. It was late when the minister drove into the yard; and

he asked if he might stay for the night. Of course he was given a welcome.

When it was getting to be time for the family to retire for the night the minister wondered how he would present the matter of family worship, but before he could think what to say Mr. Jackson reached for the Bible and read a chapter from it, while all sat quietly and listened. After the reading they knelt down and prayed.

"Mr. Jackson," the minister said after prayer, "I am very happy indeed to find that you have family worship. I thought to establish family worship here, but I see it is already established."

"Yes," Mr. Jackson replied, "we have had family worship ever since we had a home. We would no more think of doing without family worship than we would think of doing without our meals."

"How glad I am to hear that," the

minister exclaimed. "The members of your family seem to enjoy one another very much and to be very happy. I wonder if your family worship does not have something to do with it."

The next morning before the minister went away he said, "I feel so comfortable in your home; there seems to be so much love here that I should like to stop again when I pass through here."

Mr. Jackson said they would be very glad to have the minister come and stop with them whenever he could.

Later in the summer Mr. and Mrs. Taurant, from a distant city, came to spend a day and a night at the Jackson home. Mrs. Taurant noticed that her husband became very quiet soon after they arrived, but she said nothing. It appeared that Mr. Taurant was thinking and feeling deeply about something. Once during the evening when Mr. Taurant happened to look

out of the window he saw Mr. Jackson and Ella skip across the lawn to a step Ella liked so well. Tears came to Mr. Taurant's eyes as he watched them.

A little while afterwards he found Mr. Jackson alone, and he said to him: "Mr. Jackson, almost from the moment I came into your house I felt that this is a place where love dwells, and when I saw you skipping across the lawn with your daughter I had to weep, with deep feeling. I have been in many homes. I have never been in a home like this. It seems to me that love lives in the heart of each parent and in the heart of every one of the children, and love is built into every beam and board in this house."

THE END

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